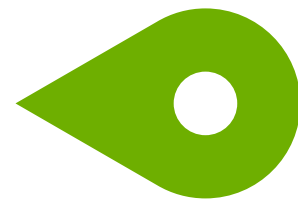


# action plan



## maximize a learning event

Attending a training can be a treat. It's a chance to learn something, meet new people, gain perspective from others' thoughts and experiences, build skills through practice, and be inspired. But as good or as great as it is, most training is a learning event.

When reading about brain science and learning, studies show that the typical human loses up to 70% of newly learned knowledge in a matter of days or weeks. Referred to as the "forgetting curve," this is not what we want to hear after investing time, resources, energy, and hopes.

The good news is that we can provide booster opportunities for our brains to retain new learning. We need to continue asking ourselves to recall the information, to take ownership of it by using it, talking about it, and tying it to our existing knowledge. Here are a few tips to help you maximize your training by turning a learning event into a learning experience and a learning experience into long-term skills and knowledge acquisition.

## before you go

1

Jot down the reasons you want to attend. What do you hope to gain? Express these reasons in goal form with a growth mindset. For example:



I want to improve the quality of my written communications.

I want to lead more effective meetings.



I'm a horrible letter and email writer.

Everybody says I stink at facilitating meetings.

2

Talk with your supervisor about the training. Discuss what you hope to learn and what they hope you'll get out of it.

3

Research shows that when our emotions are involved in an event, we have a stronger memory of it. This effect results from both positive and negative feelings, but too much negativity can interfere with learning and creativity. (continued on back)

## during the training

The most helpful emotional state when trying to learn is slightly positive. What can you do to contribute to a slightly positive training environment? When you feel negativity creeping in, take notice and see if you can adjust.

4

Try to stay focused. Arrive early to get settled in. Avoid side conversations. If you notice your mind drifting, what can you do? Stretch. Ask a question. Eat and drink. Make sure to put away any technological distractions. Take breaks when they're offered.

5

Take ownership of your learning before, during, and after a training. Think of real-life situations to which you can apply the concept you're learning. Connect the new ideas to ones you already know.

## after the training

6

Identify an opportunity to share what you learned. It could be with a co-worker, with a friend or family member, or your supervisor. Some supervisors invite employees to report back to the group at the next staff meeting. Be sure to call attention to those a-ha moments!

7

Pull out those goals you created in step 1. Review them and make the connections between what you wanted to learn and what you did learn. What helps? What gaps remain? How might you fill those?

8

Plan a few ways to use and expand your learning.

- How can you apply what you learned on the job in the next 3-6 weeks?
- Was there a book recommendation that interested you?
- Maybe there's a discussion group or online chat about the topic.
- You may find follow-up trainings either in person or online.
- Did you meet a new friend or group of friends that you'd like to continue learning with? It's a great excuse for a monthly coffee. Check in with each other to hear how they're incorporating the learning into their work.
- Is there someone you can connect with to job shadow? Is there someone you might ask to mentor you?

Learning something new is exciting and engaging, and attending a training is a great way to expand your knowledge base and get the ball rolling. With goal setting beforehand and some analysis and planning afterward, you can maximize your investment and solidify your growth by turning learning events into learning experiences, and learning experiences into long-term skills and knowledge acquisition.



King County

Happy learning!

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